

# **THE ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH ON DIGITAL PLATAFORMS: THE CASE OF TORRE DE PALMA WINE HOTEL**

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This research aims to understand the importance and influence that the management of the rural hotel attributes to the reviews generated by users of digital platforms.

Tourism companies are facing the urgent need to a quick digital transformation. Despite the pandemic situation, more than ever, costumers tends to strengthen the use of electronic word-of-mouth in order to recommend (or not) a certain place to stay. This behavior allows hotel companies to be aware on investing in reviewing services through digital platforms in a permanent and fast way. Tourists search information process on websites is transformed on consumer generated content (CGC) (Ferst, Anjos, Coutinho, & Flores, 2020; Gondim & Araújo, 2020), consequently consumers recommendation behavior tends to influence strategic options of hotel managers.

Present research is supported by a case study, which was based on a content analysis of 703 comments from clients of 21 Rural Hotels (located in the region of Alentejo), extracted from Booking and TripAdvisor platforms, between the years of 2014 and 2019. After this content analysis, a semi structured interview was conducted and applied to a rural hotel manager in Alentejo in order to know the importance of these consumer generated contents on digital platforms exert on strategic decisions of rural hotel managers.

Results gathered from CGC results evidenced an increase pattern of positive comments from year to year. The categories that register the most positive comments were environment and atmosphere; decoration and architecture; satisfaction and loyalty; services of wine tourism; and staff. The comments generated by the users are considered relevant according to the rural hotel management. The regular attention to these platforms allows them to detect positive and negative references in order to redefine and fit the services into customers' expectations. The study's main

contributions are the enlarge vision of the comments, the knowledge of the guests preferences and the fast and reasoned intervention by the management.

**Keywords** - Rural hotel; electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM); consumer generated content; Alentejo region

## REFERENCES

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